DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 095 591 CS 500 769

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TITLE A View on the Function of Self-Adaptors and Their Communication Consequences.
PUB DATE Apr 74
NOTE 26p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Communication Assn. (New Orleans, April 17-20, 1974)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$1.85 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Patterns; Body Language; *Communication (Thought Transfer); Higher Education; Interpersonal Relationship; *Literature Reviews; *Nonverbal Communication; *Social Behavior
IDENTIFIERS *Self Adaptors

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine the function served by self-adaptor type behaviors (defined here as "hand touch" on the face, body, the other hand, and the fingers) in order to discover why people perform self-adaptors and what happens when they do. Following an extensive review of the literature, it is proposed that self-adaptors serve two functions: a primary encoder function, whereby the individual uses self-adaptors to help himself prepare for or cope with problems in encoding; and a secondary encoder function, whereby self-adaptor activity provides the observer with cues for attitudinal inferences. The paper concludes with a discussion of some of the ways of testing hypotheses related to self-adaptor type behaviors. (RB)

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A View on the Function of Self-Adaptors and their Communication Consequences

By

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Summer 1974

CS 500 769

The purpose of this paper is to examine the function served by self-adaptor type behaviors, defined here as hand touch on the face, body, the other hand, and the fingers. The two questions we want to ask then are: a) why do people perform self-adaptors and b) what happens when they do? We propose that self-adaptors serve two functions; first, a primary encoder function, whereby the individual uses self-adaptors to help himself prepare for, or cope with problems in encoding; and a secondary decoder function, whereby self-adaptor activity provides the observer with cues for attitudinal inferences.

The presentation of this paper will move from the general to the specific. First, we shall briefly present some background, followed by an overview of studies touching upon self-adaptor type behaviors; next we shall examine some experimental evidence related to our rationale and propose some ways for hypothesis testing.

Background

In the overall attempt to manage the environment, individuals are faced with a multitude of situations, both familiar and new. Impressions are being formed, decisions made, and actions taken, all the while being immersed in an information ridden milieu. One of the challenging parts of this process is the daily task of dealing with fellow men, whether in direct contacts or from a distance. The challenge rests with the complexity of communicative and expressive repertoires available to people. Despite the general dominance of a particular verbal language, the recently growing interest in nonverbal behavior suggests that the

possible symbolic functions of this large segment, previously discarded as "non-cognitive" and "involuntary" behavior is no longer to be ignored. A large amount of publications have been appearing recently, both on a popular and more rigorous scientific levels. For a recent review of the major works in the area see Harrison, Cohen, Crouch, Genova and Steinberg (1973).

By and large, writing in the nonverbal area has been predominantly descriptive. Various viewpoints have emerged and different perspectives have been chosen by authors while attempting to systematize the broad range of observable movements, usually without differentiation except at the most general level. Thus, Deutsch (1963) and Gostynsky (1951) based their approach on a dynamic psychoanalytic model and emphasized the idiosyncratic symbolic meaning of movements, while Mittelman (1954) preferred viewing movements from a viewpoint rooted in a drive model of psychoanalysis; Dittman et al. (1965) focused on determining receptivity to nonverbal cues during interaction and Scheflen (1965) studied movement behavior as operating in a context of culturally defined transactions; similarly, Goffman (1963, 1967 and 1971) has most engagingly discussed some of the social consequences of the ways a person may present himself, or rather, be perceived by others. Birdwhistell (1963) has chosen a structural model rooted in linguistics for his analysis of kinetic phenomena, while Dettering (1971) is interested in viewing bodily behavior as a potential source of structured information about the sender. He argues that nonverbal units of behavior, in being analogic, often appear to be the very

reality they signify and are therefore "self-proving"; unfortunately, he does not specify the parameters of nonverbal behavior, or kinds of units, which he wishes to so examine. At the same time, his position does overlap to some degree with Ekman and Friesen's (1969) notion of intrinsic coding, where non-verbal behaviors do not stand for, but are the significant, at least in part.

A number of attempts have been made to set up typologies of non-verbal behaviors based on the frequency of their occurrence, the part of the body involved, their formal aspects, relatedness to speech, etc. Two of the most recent efforts in this direction deserve our closer attention. First, Freedman and Hoffman (1967) present a scheme for the analysis of body movement occurring spontaneously during psychotherapeutic interviews. Focussing on hand movements, a distinction is made between two broad conceptually independent classes of movements: a) those accompanying speech("termed object-focused"), e.g. descriptive and elaborative gestures and b) those involving some form of body oriented self-stimulation, and unrelated to speech("termed body-focused"), e.g. finger rubbing, nail picking, all manner of comforting or scratching movements aimed at various loci (mouth, lap, neck, breast, cheeck, hand). Described thus, it becomes apparent that the latter are movements corresponding to what we term self-adaptors. Furthermore, different kinds of object-focused movements are identified according to their integration with and primacy vis-a-vis speech: punctuating, qualifying, descriptive, etc. There is no comparable differentiation offered with respect to body-focused movements. Another typology has

been offered by Ekman and Friesen (1969) which spurred discussion, as well as research of their own and others in recent years. On the basis of the origin, coding and usage of movements, their scheme attempts a distinction between several classes of non-verbal behavior: emblems, affect displays, regulators, illustrators and adaptors. According to these authors, adaptors are unintentional hand movements which have no intrinsic relationship to concomitant speech, but may be triggered by the speaker's internal states associated with the conversation. The authors distinguish three types of adaptors: object-adaptors, which involve the handling of some object, e.g. playing with a matchbox, part of clothing, or a pencil; alter-adaptors, which involve touching an interactant, and self-adaptors, which involve actions of the hand touching various parts of one's body, e.g. scratching, picking, rubbing, stroking, massaging etc. of the face, the fingers, the other hand, the chest, the head etc. According to Ekman and Friesen, self-adaptors occur more when the person is in private, and are less common in a public place. They are never deliberate, and receive little direct attention or comment from others. Self-adaptors emmited by an adult appear in a fragmented or reduced form as compared to the early and thorough adaptive movements postulated as their base of origin. The normative information offered does not extend over to frequency of occurrence or cross-cultural distribution of self-adaptors.

Let us now briefly survey some of the pertinent work touching upon self-adaptors, having organized it around three major approaches we discerned--developmental, focus on eliciting factors, and judgemental.

The first turns to early experience in search for shaping influences; the second treats self-adaptors as the dependent variable, while the third takes self-adaptors as an independent variable. Our review will follow just that order.

Overview on Self-Adaptors

The notion of self-adaptors has been referred to in previous literature by authors utilizing various approaches to the study of "gestures", "habits", "symptomatic movements" and the like. One approach has been tracing back such movements, as in the work of Sullivan (1953) who discusses the early self-expressions of a child which allow him to secure appropriate, anxiety-removing responses from the mother; later in life the individual emerges with a behavioral idiom which could be plotted on his previous symbolic strategies. Mirsky (1968) emphasizes the processes whereby various motoric activities attain significance through the child's interaction with the mother; thus a movement may become a social signal only after the mother has responded to it; the activity will go astray if the mother does not recognize or respond to the expressive cues and appropriately gratify the underlying needs or state. Ekman and Friesen (1969) also view adaptors ontogenetically, i.e. the movements are learned by each person early in life as part of a rather broad range of bodily and social needs. Furthermore, child rearing practices and socialization have been postulated as a strong influence in shaping movement repertoire later in life by Thomas et al. (1968); in a longitudinal study they found that behavioral distrubances appeared

when demands made upon the child were dissonant with his behavioral style. Among the symptoms studied they included "habits" such as nail biting, nose picking, scratching, etc. Cohen (1973) argues that parental restrictions will determine the general gestural activity and possibly inhibit the use of specific movements. There is also evidence, however, that socialization of gesticular behavior may not be a matter of general presence or absence of parental restrictions, but rather a differentiation dependent on the kind of emphasis underlying parental restrictiveness. For example, Rosen and D'Andrade (1959) asked mothers to indicate how often their sons had "different problems that children have" and also inquired in the child-rearing practices involved. It turned out that mothers emphasizing obedience, conformity and self-control reported their son's frequent insecurity over appropriate behavior; on the other hand, mothers who emphasized performance, independence and achievement, rather than self-control, reported that their sons were troubled more often by "nervous habits" like biting nails, scratching, pulling hair, etc., behaviors akin to our notion of self-adaptors. Similarly, MacKinon (1938) tried to show that nervous habits are associated with psychological discipline applied by parents and a resulting inner-directed achievement orientation, as contrasted with outer-oriented conformity orientation. A factor analytic study of adaptive behaviors (Nihira, 1969) indicated two major parameters at play - social maladaption and personal independence; so, inappropriate or unpleasant "mannerisms" and socially inacceptable "manners" were associated with the social maladaptation dimension,

while lack of personal independence was related to odd and stereotypic behaviors. Unfortunately, the study does not clearly indicate how the behavior and manner categories were arrived at, nor fully accounts for the specific adaptive movements covered by each category. The role of the psychosocial environment (Efron, 1941), development of communication mastery with age (Ruesch and Kees, 1972) and imitation-learning through social interaction (Hartup, 1970) are all good leads to the likely occurrence of self-adaptors on a general level. As Leach (1972) has pointed out, verbal performance takes place within a matrix of verbal competence; by extension we can say that nonverbal performance takes place in a matrix of cultural competence and convention as to behaviors which are viewed either as facilitating or interfering with interaction. Bearing in mind the fragmented and reduced form in which the original adaptor movements appear in adulthood (Ekman and Friesen, 1972), it seems reasonable to assume that self-adaptors are subjected to a more severe socialization and attenuate with age, as compared to other movements deemed relatively more acceptable as an expressive mode. But there are no solid data to show whether and when such fragmentation processes do take place. We are also limited in what we know by the paucity of relevant findings related to both the general level and the specific movement differentiation between the kinds of self-adaptors observable at an early age.

Another approach characterizes a second group of studies, where non-verbal behavior, including self-adaptor type movements, has been measured as it varies systematically with other variables, such as

situational, clinical or interactive conditions. Thus Germana (1969) found that adaptive movements increased with transitions from inactivity toward intensive situations, from inactivity toward overt behavior, or when dealing with new stimuli. Fish (1967) reports observation of motor activity based on his work in psychopathology, including what he termed "spontaneous" movements of the following kinds: scratching head, touching, stroking, pulling nose, face, chin, covering mouth, etc. He emphasized their involuntary character and studied their occurrence as a "displacement" alternative in interactions. Freedman and Hoffman (1972) looked into variations in kinetic behavior with changing clinical state of the subject; their position is that the presence or absence of some movements provide guidelines to the functional meaning of their body and object focused categories; they measured behavior occurrence per 10 sec. segments, adopting Ekman and Friesen's (1966) method of defining the unit of analysis as a visibly discriminable movement act. Of the behaviors they measured, as patients passed from acute to post acute state of clinical improvement, of particular interest to us are "body-focused" movements described as body oriented stimulation, such as rubbing of the fingers, nail picking, massaging, comforting movements around the mouth, nose, breast, lap or neck. The study focused on movement behavior during dialogue and anxiety situations in particular. Their observations were limited to only two objects, so they followed through with some of their inquiries in subsequent investigations. In another study Freedman et al. (1973) focused on the relationship between kinetic behavior and

aggressive affect. Of particular interest to us are the following movements examined by the authors--hand-to-hand, rubbing or stroking of the hands and fingers by each other, or on itself; body-touch, e.g. continuous or brief (up to 3 sec.) touch of the hand on the body or its adornments, garments. Among other things, the study found significant association between object focused movements (e.g. illustrators) and verbal aggression on one hand, and some body focused movements (e.g. self-adaptors) and covert hostility, on the other hand. Results were interpreted in terms of the differential role of object and body focused movements in the encoding of affect. An investigation of movement differentiation in varying conversational climates (Freedman et al., 1972) and varying cognitive difficulty focused on subject's movement behavior during three interview conditions: warm association, cold association and warm interchange. Both negative personal contact (cold condition) and cognitive difficulty induced more body-focused movements ($p < .05$).

While the above mentioned work treats movement behavior as the dependent variable measured in different eliciting situations, a third approach characterizes the next two studies; here movement behavior of subjects is treated as the independent variable, thus seeking to determine observer's reactions, judgement or interpretation of movement behaviors.

Rosenfeld (1972) investigated interpersonal influence processes during interaction, by instructing one of the subjects in the dyad to seek approval from his interactant, or to avoid approval; then after

the conversation had been completed, he measured the attitude of the conversational peer. Of interest to us are findings related to self-manipulators (movements akin to self-adaptors), which can be viewed as evidence for the low level of awareness in performing self-adaptors; e.g. "approval seekers" displayed more smiles, nods, etc., but there was no change in the amount of self-manipulators.

In their work on clues to deception, Ekman and Friesen (1969, 1972) consider adaptors as a nonverbal behavior type of central importance as leakage and deception clues. They reason that self-adaptors should be quite a good source of deception clues because they are performed with little awareness, rarely receive comment, and are rarely employed as a part of simulation, or "cover-up"; the movements in question involve the hands, face and the feet, e.g. tearing at a fingernail, face play, frequent shift in leg position, etc. In the experiments, subjects were instructed to either comment frankly, or be deceptive about what they saw and felt during pleasant and stressful movie viewing sessions. Their behavior was recorded and observers were subsequently asked to judge whether sample of nonverbal behavior was from the honest or from the deceptive session. As expected, self-adaptors allowed a more accurate judgement of deception or honesty than did facial behavior.

The preceding discussion has familiarized us with the approach and the goals of each study. We shall next refer to some of their specific outcomes, as they help clarify the arguments which follow.

Functions of Self-Adaptors

In terms of our argument for a primary encoder and a secondary

decoder function of self-adaptors, some experimental evidence, derived from a number of experimental studies already reviewed in the preceding section, can be brought to bear. One characteristic of self-adaptor type behavior according to Ekman and Friesen (1969, 1972) is that it is "utilized in connection with a variety of problems and needs", some of which are relevant to blocking sensory inputs, or facilitating/blocking sound making and speech. Indeed, several studies give support to the proposed encoder function, by showing that self-adaptor type behavior will be produced when the verbal communication is hindered in some way. Adaptor movements then could be viewed as temporary substitutes for failure or inability to communicate, thus helping the faltering encoder. Several "hindering" factors emerge as potential elicitors of self-adaptors. In their study on movement behavior on varying communicative climates, Freedman et al. (1972) found that interpersonal stress increased self-adaptor activity, while reducing illustrator type movements. Furthermore, there was a decrease in the frequency of self-adaptor movements with a reduction of tension or anxiety. These results are consistent with Germana's (1969), where adaptive movements were associated with reported anxiety, apprehension or general tension of subjects. Similarly, Fish (1967) indicated that self-adaptor type behaviors emerged as a "displacement" activity, an alternative occurring in connection with frustration or prevention from speech. Freedman et al. (1972) also hypothesized that subjects who have difficulty in representing and encoding thoughts into words will resort more often to self-adaptor activity. This expectation was

confirmed, as individuals with lesser competence to articulate displayed self-adaptor type behaviors more frequently than their fluent counterparts. Another study explored the relationship between body movement activity and verbal encoding of aggression (Freedman et al., 1973). As expected, speech-related movements, such as illustrators, were linked to the ability to encode hostile promptings into the verbal content. At the same time individuals who were unwilling or unable to engage in verbal aggression displayed more self-adaptor behaviors; hand to hand movements in particular were significantly associated with covert hostility (r=.52). Let it be noted, however, that the results with respect to the above mentioned specific self-adaptor movement are subject of possible limitations due to the nature of the sample utilized for the study. Observations were based on a culturally homogeneous urbanite group of Jewish female college students. Further replication is necessary in order to resolve any doubt as to the generalizibility of outcomes. Based on the total observations of kinetic activity during experimental conditions, the study also proposes that self-adaptor type movements "constitute activities preparing for and anticipating the as yet unverbalized". This view is consistent with Mahl's (1970) argument regarding a priming function of motility whereby some movement activities have attributes that may pave the way toward articulation. The suggestion that self-adaptors type behavior may be produced as part of the encoder function, in helping the individual prepare, also runs through Germana's (1969) conclusion that adaptive movements "constitute a preparatory phase to overt behavior", and

that they "coincide with interruptions or reorganization of mental activity" (Fish, 1967).

We have at our disposal far less empirical evidence to show in support of the proposed secondary decoder function of self-adaptors. The point is how much does indeed self-adaptor activity provide an observer with indirect cues about the relative difficulty an individual has in certain communication situations, and what are the inferences that observers would typically make in associating observable self-adaptor type behaviors with an individual's attributes or internal states. According to Ekman and Friesen (1969) "at least some self-adaptors convey attitudinal information to observers". In a study of dyadic interaction, Rosenfeld (1972) looked at the reaction of each conversational peer to the movement behaviors displayed by their interactant, measuring it after each session was completed. Of particular interest to us is his finding that self-manipulator display was negatively related to reported peer approval. Also, centrally important to us is the project on deception carried out by Ekman and Friesen (1973). It focused on female students of a School of Nursing as subjects; the authors based their inquiry on the assumption that in a profession such as nursing, clinically relevant skills are of crucial importance; e.g. the ability to appear relaxed, composed, and to successfully mask discomfort induced by situations on the job. The experimental manipulations were rooted in their interpretation that self-adaptors generally tend to reveal discomfort or anxiety. Results indicated that indeed nurse students who emerged as most successful in misleading observers

during the deception sessions, also did very well in clinical practicum (.63) at the school; furthermore, the study found that the overall amount of self-adaptor activity displayed by subjects was positively correlated (.75) with observer judgment of deception.

Some Research Approaches

In this paper we have dealt with the specific problem which self-adaptor type bahaviors pose to researchers interested in the nonverbal area; we have pulled together some of the available evidence to indicate the current status of our knowledge with regard to self-adaptors; we have also proposed that self-adaptor type activities serve two functions, a primary encoder oriented function, and a secondary decoder oriented function. In the remaining portion of this paper we shall propose two strategies for the study of self-adaptor functions. These are dictated by the nature of the questions we want to ask about self-adaptors at this time. What are the eliciting situations associated with the production of self-adaptors across subjects? What are the properties of the eliciting situation most pertinent to variations in subject self-adaptive behavior? Are specific eliciting situations associated with specific kinds of self-adaptors? What are some individual attributes associated with the production of self-adaptors? Is some self-adaptor output received and reacted to by the observer? How much does an observer interprete self-adaptor behaviors in making inferences about the interaction? Does the amount of self-adaptor behavior displayed make a difference? It is our belief that by planning a research investigation which combines

strategies viewing self-adaptor activity as a dependent variable, and also viewing these behaviors as an independent variable, we can best arrive at a meaningful picture regarding the proposed self-adaptor functions. By setting up a field experiment on one hand, and a laboratory experiment on the other hand, we hope to obtain data about the general level of self-adaptor use, and also about some specific kinds of self-adaptor movements. With respect to the encoder function, we hope to learn then, whether self-adaptor output has any constancy across individuals with regard to the eliciting situations that the behavior can be associated with; with regard to the decoder function we hope to learn whether responses of observers indicate that the information conveyed via self-adaptor behaviors is consistent.

We feel that a field experiment where the format of the interaction is manipulated would be best suited to study the encoder function of self-adaptor type behaviors. It is proposed that a seminar-like setting is utilized during regular class work periods, with required regular attendance, and keeping the size of the groups relatively small in order to facilitate observation and recording of behavior. The setting places the seminar group in a classroom, while recording equipment shall be operated from an adjacent room divided by one way-mirror wall. Such facilities do exist on the MSU campus (The Instructional Media Center) and have previously been used with success by N. Katzman and P. Monge in their investigation of group interaction processes. The study calls for recording and analysis of the subjects self-adaptor behavior at four points in time; first, the nonverbal behavior of subjects recorded

during regular seminar activities, such as instructor presentation, discussion of material, etc. interaction in a relaxed informal seminar climate, which will provide the necessary baseline data on the behavior of each subject; second, recording subject behavior during preparation for and writing a test administered in class will provide data on self-adaptor activity during a preparatory and encoding condition considered to be moderately stressful; third, recording subject behavior during a verbal presentation in front of the class and the instructor, which will provide data in a verbal encoding condition which we shall consider as producing higher tension or anxiety. Finally, subject behavior will be recorded during a one-to-one interaction with the instructor, replicating Freedman et al.'s (1972) condition of "warm interchange". This interaction will be standardized across subjects by running through the same questions each time, whereby the instructor will inquire about subject's opinion of the course content and format, the nature of the tests, etc. and finally will debrief them with regard to the field experiment. The latter portion will allow for a check on validity by uncovering instances of subjects suspecting the existence of recording procedures all along. In addition, the design will incorporate measures of articulative competence, measures of test-related and presentation-related anxiety, and measures of perceived difficulty of the test and the presentation assignment by subjects. In formulating our hypotheses we seek to integrate previous findings discussed earlier.

The proposed encoder function of self-adaptor behaviors suggests the following hypotheses for testing:

1) overall self-adaptor activity will increase from the normal class-discussion condition to the test preparation and class presentation conditions;

that is, we view increased tension as a potential eliciting factor. If met, this expectation will corroborate previously isolated findings.

2) overall self-adaptor activity will be higher during the test-taking condition as compared to the class presentation condition, where subjects will be more aware of being observed by their peers.

Here we address ourselves to the postulated unintentional nature of self-adaptors and also the expected social normative influences.

3) subjects at a lower level of articulatory competence will produce more self-adaptor activity than their more fluent counterparts;

given the nature of the task, less articulate individuals are expected to make more of an effort and have more to cope with.

4) reported difficulty of test and presentation assignments will be strongly related to self-adaptor activity displayed in the corresponding situations by each subject.

The relation of such evidence to the proposed encoder function is quite apparent.

5) self-adaptor activity during the warm interchange condition will be lower than either of the two experimental conditions;

we expect self-adaptor activity to decrease when <u>dialogue</u> prevails; tension as a potential eliciting factor would be lower; so we expect encoder effort to be reduced.

Generally speaking there are two reasons which tend to recommend this approach: first, the class situation described is fairly common and satisfies our requirement in terms of typicality; second, it allows

the examination of a fair number of eliciting factors; what this design does not address itself to, is self-adaptor behavior beyond a general level of occurrence. This situation can be remedied by the laboratory design proposed next. For the purposes of our investigation we intend to focus on a narrower set of self-adaptor behaviors, defining them here as hand-to-hand, and hand-to-face touch motions on the self. The selection focuses on the hands and the face since these areas most readily fall within the range of observation during social interaction. The laboratory experiment, we feel, will prove useful to the study of the decoder function of self-adaptors type behaviors. The design calls for a stimulus presentation incorporating the self-adaptor behaviors defined above, and analysis of the observers' reaction. We propose that a videotaped "lecture" or "editorial", performed by a professional actor, be utilized as the stimulus presentation; at least three conditions should be incorporated: the control version will contain a minimal amount or no self-adaptors whatsoever, while several experimental conditions will include increasing frequencies of self-adaptor behavior; this will allow a measure of observer response as well as pinpointing the amount of self-adaptor display which begins to exert a deleterious effect on audience's perception of the source's performance. Audience reaction will be tapped through a source credibility format test along the dimensions of evaluation (competence), activity (dynamism) and trustworthiness. The experiment will be replicated three times: mixed condition, where both hand and face oriented self-adaptors will be incorporated, and two other conditions, one using only hand-oriented,

the other using only face-oriented self-adaptors; we believe that such procedure will better enable us to detect specific consequences stemming from the separate kinds of self-adaptors. The decoder function suggests that ratings of source credibility will deteriorate with increasing self-adaptor activity displayed by the speaker; as before, we are guided by already reviewed findings on hand and face play self-adaptors, and propose to test the following hypotheses:

a) in the "mixed" condition, the main effect will be that overall increase of self-adaptor behavior will result in lowered source credibility ratings as compared to the control condition;

if indeed self-adaptive activity as a sign of uneasiness or anxiety is picked up by the observers, the perceived overall poise of the source will be marred.

b) increasing self-adaptor activity will have a stronger deleterious effect on the dynamism and trustworthiness dimensions, less so on the competence dimension;

we expect that perceived uneasiness is more likely to be interpreted as lack of social command or self control, than as a lack of preparation.

c) increasing face-oriented activity will negatively affect the perceived trustworthiness more than the dynamism or competence of the speaker.

Here we are guided by previous findings indicating that observers associated face play mostly with deceptive attempts.

d) increased hand-to-hand activity will negatively affect the perceived dynamism more than the competence or trustworthiness of the speaker.

We expect that such adaptor display will be interpreted as indicative of uneasiness and tension, and reduce the perceived social control

commanded by the source.

Conclusion

It is hoped that the approach proposed here will enable us to begin pulling together the insights obtained through previous and somewhat disparate findings regarding self-adaptor type behavior. It is realized at the same time, that obtaining the hoped for outcomes from the proposed inquiries represents only the initial step in bringing our understanding of specific self-adaptors and their consequences to a more concrete form. A few further remarks are in order then; if our expectations in the studies outlined above are confirmed, what next? Can we begin thinking in terms of a broader programmatic framework? It is conceivable that other studies rooted in the notion of a decoder function could be put to work; the goal would be to focus on other dependent variables in a more general model of expected consequences. Also it is expected that results obtained in inquiries such as our field experiment will be used as a guideline for laboratory studies aiming to refine our knowledge about specific self-adaptors and specific consequences studied. What inquiries based on the encoder function should follow? What are other eliciting factors whose influence on self-adaptor production is worthwhile investigating by communication researchers? What of the proposition that specific internal states are associated with specific self-adaptor behaviors? Is comparable differentiation demonstrable in the kinds of inferences observers are able to make? What are the components of self-adaptor display which

are associated with some measurable observer reaction; how much and what components go systematically unnoticed? What can we learn about the parameters of social normative influences? Are certain eliciting situations and certain adaptor displays subject to stronger social inhibitions than others? This author is strongly inclined to restrain further speculation until results obtained by the proposed two studies afford some firm standing ground. Besides tying up together formerly scattered reports, undoubtedly there will be some new insights obtained in the process of this work.

One pressing question comes to mind, however, and it is likely to emerge among the first points of order. We have noticed that all previous work, as well as the approach taken here, has concentrated on self-adaptors with the implicit assumption that both the eliciting factors and the indicative cues associated with self-adaptors are of a predominantly negative nature. In our opinion, it may be well worth the effort of future investigators to look into the possibility of qualifying this general view. For example, this researcher would begin by testing potential differentiations rooted in a finer distinction ween performances of the <u>same</u> self-adaptor; specifically, performance types which have been characterized as "comforting", and "supporting", exploring the possibility of self-adaptive activity associated with contentment. An extended discussion of this idea is outside the scope of this paper, but it was nevertheless deemed worthy of mention. Despite the prospect of facing time consuming and painstaking tasks, the reward of better understanding is likely to be a strong enough incentive.

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